

New Population Estimates Reveal Slight Overall Growth in Michigan – Decline in Most Cities

Michigan's population increased by an estimated 1.4% from the 2000 Decennial Census to 2003. However, this growth is not evenly distributed among local communities, with major cities experiencing an estimated decrease in population, while non-urban communities experienced the greatest growth.

For cities over 100,000 in population, the estimated population decreased. These decreases were substantial in Detroit (-4.2%) and Flint (-3.7%). However, the population decline for Detroit may be overstated because the current estimation methodology does not fully distinguish between actual population loss and demolition of vacant housing. Nonetheless, estimated population losses were smaller in Warren (-1.6%), Grand Rapids (-1.1%), and Lansing (-0.8%). The only two large cities with increases in estimated population are Ann Arbor (+0.3%) and Sterling Heights (+1.4%).

Most of the smaller central cities of metropolitan areas also declined in population, including Saginaw (-4.1%), Bay City (-3.8%), Jackson (-3.2%), Kalamazoo (-2.4%), Port Huron (-1.8%), Holland (-1.1%), Dearborn (-1.1%), Muskegon (-0.7%), Pontiac (-0.6%), and East Lansing (-0.1%). The only central city with an estimated increase in population was Battle Creek (+0.9%).

Although the estimated population has declined in most large cities and central cities, it has increased in most of the other cities and townships that comprise urbanized areas. Population increased in 55 percent of the 271 cities, villages, and townships or remainders of townships for which at least half of the population was classified as living in an urbanized area in 2000. Despite population losses in most large cities and central cities, the aggregate population of these 271 communities increased slightly (+0.8%).

Michigan's urban communities that are not part of urbanized areas also experienced a small amount of growth from 2000 to 2003. Although estimated population increased in only 49 percent of these communities, their aggregate population grew slightly during this period (+0.7%).

The fastest growth occurred among the 1,406 Michigan communities that are predominantly non-urban. There the estimated population increased in 71 percent of these communities, and their aggregate population increased by 4.7%.

Communities with estimated population increases of 25 percent or more include Saline township in Washtenaw county (+64.1%), Marenisco township in Gogebic county (+59.1%), Fife Lake township in Grand Traverse county (+57%), New Baltimore in Macomb county (+31.7%), Augusta township in Washtenaw county (28.7%), Union charter township in Isabella county (+27.8%), and Macomb township in Macomb county (27.3%).

The largest population decreases occurred in Eagle Harbor township (-18.4%) and Pleasantview township (-10.2%). Both of these townships experienced the closure of

large group quarter facilities, which had previously accounted for a substantial portion of their populations.